



# The Hemel Hempstead School

## News

29 January 2010

[www.hhs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hhs.herts.sch.uk)

### HeadLines

In a week when we moved out of the recession by a hair's breadth, there were several other news stories to divert our attention away from the doom and gloom of everyday life to a world elsewhere. Stories which challenged our view of the universe as we thought we knew it; a leading astronomer said that Earth's twin planet would be found by the end of the year, the first film to be made entirely by chimps was ready to roll and two pairs of swans swapped partners in a cruel reversal of all that we believed to be right. Where will it all end?

Given this dent to our optimism for a happier future, what are we to advise our children about the paths to follow in order to secure fulfilment; is there any hope of their dreams being realised? Four school events which raise my hopes come to mind.

The first is the recent Options evening which was very well attended and gave Year 9 students and their parents guidance regarding the courses that should be chosen for Year 10. Choosing the right course now is crucial for future success. Not necessarily at the level of choosing a GCSE which paves the way for a particular A level or degree course to be followed, but alighting upon a broad and balanced menu including English, Maths and Science for all, a language, Arts and Humanities for most and so on...which ensures success for the vast majority at level 2, that elusive 5 A\*-C ceiling. I am even more convinced that more students will be choosing the right subjects, ones in which they can achieve and which give them the confidence to progress.

The second event is the presentation of the 'mock' results to Year 11 students. Those results show that the vast majority are 'on track' to attain excellent results in the summer. Other results provide a 'wake up call' indicating that there is much work to be done and that dreams will not be realised unless maximum efforts are made with all support available being utilised, including catch up and revision classes. I know that 2010 will be one of our bumper years and that the overall headline figures will be brilliant, but I am more concerned about individual students reaching their target grades and beyond so that they can progress to the next steps.

And what are those next steps likely to be? The third event to mention is the 'Into the Sixth' evening of next Thursday at which presentations of Sixth Form courses enable students to make informed choices about the A levels and BTECs they will pursue for the next two years. Following talks in the hall, students and parents are free to sample a range of subjects in order to clarify their choices for post -16. It will be a popular occasion and I look forward to seeing many of you there in order to survive my speech before moving on to the other areas where all will be explained for your son or daughter to make an informed choice.

The fourth and final event I would wish to mention is the school musical 'The Pajama Game' which opened on Wednesday and continues through to Saturday. Our 'Once a Year' musical (to misquote a song from the show) breaks the tradition of a major production every two years and enables us to see part of the musical canon which is infrequently performed. I first saw it when my godfather belted out the strains of 'Hey there, you with the stars in your eyes' to twelve hundred people a night at the Embassy Theatre and I last saw it in a lacklustre London revival starring Leslie Ash. That leaves plenty of room for an inspirational Diane Heale version, ably assisted by Sharon Sepala, Debbie Bailey and a large team of staff helpers who have spent weekends painting scenery and getting the show ready. I can't wait to see it and I know that the young cast is terribly excited about the whole endeavour. I thank everyone who has given so generously of their time to make PJs the fashion item of choice and to create another marvellous opportunity for our students.

The past few years have been difficult ones for many of us. The recession has bitten hard and has affected schools in many tangible and more subtle ways. However, the suffering of the Haitian people puts many things into perspective. May I thank James Chappelow and the student helpers, including some delightful young ladies from Miss Billinge's form, who have collected money for the Earthquake fund this week and even dodged the moths flying out of my purse to gather a creditable sum. May I also thank those who gave. I wonder if the life to be found on distant planets will replicate the goodness of young souls seen in this school everyday? Whether those film-making chimpanzees will create an 'Avatar' like epic out of it all remains to be seen.

**Sandra Samwell, Headteacher**

### ***Correction to Gold Letter 125 issued this week***

We apologise for the error in the letter distributed to Year 11 concerning the Diploma Course Information meetings taking place on 9<sup>th</sup> February. The venues for the meetings were transposed. The correct information is as follows:

#### **Longdean School, 7 pm**

IT Diploma

Business, Admin & Finance Diploma

#### **John F Kennedy School 7 pm**

Creative and Media Diploma



## **ARTS NEWS**

### **'The Pajama Game'**

The school musical happens on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday of this week - expect a review in next week's newsletter. Certainly if dedication is a measure of success, the review should be a glowing one, because staff, cast and crew have slept, dreamt, worked, thought, existed only in relation to the performance.

You could argue that a school's main aim is to educate, and that time spent on things such as plays, exhibitions and concerts would be better spent on studying and revising. But that is to ignore the full meaning of the word 'educate'. The students who have been lucky enough to take part in this play (and in the countless other extra-curricular sports and activities offered by this school) learn huge amounts about really important subjects, like teamwork, self-discipline, how to take criticism and time-management - including facing the consequences if you don't get this last element right. When adults look back on their school days, it is the extra-curricular things they remember: those, and teachers of striking personality. I think the students involved in 'The Pajama Game' will have good reasons to remember this production!

*Ms Darby, Assistant Headteacher*

**Open day at Watford School of Music** Clarendon Road, Watford on Saturday 6th Feb 2 - 4pm. £1 admission per adult. There will be live performances and a chance to try out all strings, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. We offer all of these instruments here at school if you fancy learning after trying them out. There will be refreshments and a chance to find out about Music School activities, bands and ensembles. Any questions, see Mrs Bailey in the Music Department.

### **Year 11 Post-16 Options Day**

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, we held the annual Year 11 Post-16 Options Day. This year there was a lot of information to impart to students and we invited a number of guest speakers to talk about the different options available. Representatives from West Herts College, the University of Hertfordshire, the National Apprenticeships Service and our own Sixth Form all spoke to students about what they could gain by following a particular pathway after GCSEs. There was also time spent with Form Tutors discussing application forms, hearing about how the new 'Common Application Process' works as well as a short talk by a member of staff from one of the country's biggest employers about what makes a good employee. Students were given a booklet published by Youth Connexions which contains lots of useful advice about choosing the right route for them. This has a pull-out guide for parents and carers for you to help your children with their learning and career choices. We hope that students found the day useful and informative and if they or parents have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Mrs Keenan in the Careers Department.

*Miss Bond, Careers Coordinator*

### **HEADTEACHER'S COMMENDATIONS**

***For Excellent Work in Graphics:*** Tessa Milligan 7F, Lucy Jackson 7F, Lauren Shirley 7F, Sophie Izzard 7L, Lizzy Markham 7L.

***For Excellent Work in Art:*** Mary Pattinson 9P.

***For Excellent Work in Chemistry:*** Charlotte Keene 9P.

### **Yoga with Santoshni**

Yoga classes will be taking place every Thursday, commencing next Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February from 3.45 pm to 4.45 pm in the Old Gym. These classes are for parents of students of the school and teachers only, costing £4 each session. Please contact me at school if you would like further information.

*Mrs Ramnarine, Diversity Co-ordinator*

# PTA News

## Quiz Night

We have arranged a quiz night for Saturday 27th February at 8 pm.

Once again it will be held in the Sixth Form block and hosted by James Chappelow. Tickets are £4 each and bring your own food and drink. We will be holding a raffle. Teams should be no more than 8 and there will be prizes for the winning team.

Please get a team together and come along and join the fun.

## Jumble Sale

This is to be held on Saturday 13th March at 10 am.

Please start collecting your unwanted items together now as we have the room to take them from you. As ever we would appreciate only good quality items - if you think it needs to be binned then please bin it as we do not have the room for unsaleable items.

## Theatre Trip

We will shortly be sending out information regarding the next theatre trip. If you did not receive details about our last trip via e-mail and you would like to be on our database, then please send an e-mail to the following address – [hhsatheatre@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hhsatheatre@hotmail.co.uk). As this account has been newly set up, it would also help if all present members of our database could send an e-mail to this address so that we can be certain that we have your correct details.

## Next meeting

Our next meeting is on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March at 6pm in the library, please come along and join us, we would love to see you.

**Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350), email [s.stallworthy@sky.com](mailto:s.stallworthy@sky.com)**

## Diversity News

### Chinese New Year

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February Year 8 and Year 9 students will have the opportunity to take part in a Chinese Arts and Crafts Workshop at lunchtime in Art 1. Please could students sign up at Student Services if they would like to take part. A packed lunch will be needed on the day.

In recognition of Chinese New Year our Catering provider will be offering a Chinese menu in addition to the normal fare on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February:

Hoisin Chicken Panini

Sweet & Sour Chicken

Black Bean Beef

Vegetarian Sweet Chilli Stir Fry

**Mrs Ramnarine, Diversity Co-ordinator**



# Science & Maths News



## Calling all Year 10 Top Set Maths Students

Your second module is not far away (Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March) and therefore I will be offering revision sessions for you after school on Mondays from 3.30 to 4.30 pm starting straight away. In addition to this, past papers and revision resources can be found via the student shared area in the Maths folder and the mymaths website also has great lessons for you to work through. The Maths Department would like to take this opportunity to wish students involved the best of luck in their exam.

**Miss Bandle, Maths Department**

## Science Opportunity:

### Saturday 6 February 2010 - Discover the fun and creativity of engineering

Two family sessions: 10.30 am – 12 noon or 1pm - 2.30pm

Department of Engineering, Trumpington Street, Cambridge

[http://www.eng.cam.ac.uk/outreach/eventinfo/challenge\\_days/Hovermagic6Feb10.html](http://www.eng.cam.ac.uk/outreach/eventinfo/challenge_days/Hovermagic6Feb10.html)

Cambridge engineers will help you design and build a hovercraft to race against the clock. Suitable for teams of 4 (including adults). Designed for ages 7-12; although the whole family can join in!

The hovercraft will be kept by the building teams. For more information contact Joy Warde [outreach-officer@eng.cam.ac.uk](mailto:outreach-officer@eng.cam.ac.uk) or by telephone 01223 332702.



## Dates for Your Diary

### \*\*\*Gold Week\*\*\*

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb** Year 11 Science Module  
Parents Information Evening for Honduras Trip

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb** Year 11 Science Coursework Day (3 sets only)

**4<sup>th</sup> Feb** Years 9 – 11 Intermediate Maths Challenge  
Year 11 'Into the Sixth' Evening, 7.15 pm

**5<sup>th</sup> Feb** Danceathon – South Africa Tour fundraiser

**7<sup>th</sup> Feb** Year 13 BTEC Variety Show rehearsal

### \*\*\*Blue Week\*\*\*

**8<sup>th</sup> Feb** Year 9 trip to Tate/Globe (groups B1/B2/B3)  
Year 13 BTEC Variety Show

**9<sup>th</sup> Feb** Year 11 into Year 12 Diploma Information Evening (Business Admin & Finance and IT at Longdean, Creative and Media at JFK)

**10<sup>th</sup> Feb** Year 9 trip to Tate/Globe(groups A1/A2/A3/A4)

**11<sup>th</sup> Feb** Year 7 Parent Consultation Evening

**12<sup>th</sup> Feb** **GOLD FRIDAY TIMETABLE**

# SPORTS



## Fixtures

### Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Jan

Football v Berkhamsted Year 9 and 10 only (H)

### Mon 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

Senior District League Netball v JFK (A) Indoors

Year 7 & 8 District League Netball v Tring (A)

### Weds 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb

Year 9 District League Netball v JFK (H)

Year 7 District Cup Football v Tring (A)

Under 14 Girls Football v Dame Alice Owens 2.30 (H)

### Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Feb

Year 9 District League Netball v Longdean (A)

Year 8 Rugby v Mount Grace 2.30 (A)

Year 9 District Cup Football Semi Final v JFK (A)

### Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

Football v Cavendish (TBC)

County Cross Country Championships, Westminster Lodge, St Albans

## Results

U15 Girls Football v JFK won 2-1

Year 8 District League Netball v JFK won 15-13

Year 8 Boys District League Basketball v Adeyfield won 56-44

U15 Girls County League Basketball v Westfield won 37-19

U14 Boys County Cup Football v Verulam lost 0-1

U13 Boys County Cup Football v Nicholas Breakspeare 3-3 (lost on penalties 4-5)

U18 County Cup v JFK lost 1-3

Football v John Lawes

Year 7 lost 1-6

Year 8 won 2-1

Year 9 lost 1-2

Year 10 won 7-2

Year 9 Girls District Basketball v JFK won

U15 Boys County League Basketball v Longdean lost 34-41

U19 Boys ESBBA v Loughton, Essex lost 41-90

U13 Girls County League Basketball v Queens - match conceded by Queens, points awarded to HHS

## SPORTS NEWS

Congratulations must go to the girls' Basketball squads this week who, after a couple of very physical matches, remain unbeaten in the County League. Keep up the good work! The Year 8 Rugby squad has also done well this year. They have a match on Thursday against Mount Grace school which will be a tester, but if they continue to train I am sure that we will continue on our winning ways!

As practice sessions get back to normal, next week sees the first HHS Inter House Wii competition for Year 8. With A, C and F competing in the Winter Olympics on Monday and L, N and P on Tuesday, I look forward to seeing the finals on Thursday lunchtime in the Hall. Good luck to all involved and thank you to Miss Fraser for organising this innovative competition.

*Miss Bevan, Learning Leader: PE*

### *Girls U14 Football v JFK (2-1 win)*

As we approached the pitch the goals looked extremely daunting. However, the pitch was small in comparison. We started the league game with a high percentage of possession having numerous attacks on goal with a Millie Gulley (one of the players of the match) long-range kick just skimming the cross bar. The defence (including players of the match Alice Markham and Callie Waters) kept their shape well at the back, making precision tackles to keep the opposition at bay. The team continued to put pressure on JFK. However the first goal came from the break of play, seeing JFK at the edge of the goal area for the first time in the game. A shot came in and was defended by the strong HHS side, once again the ball was loose and first to it was JFK, the shot went towards the bottom right hand corner and Jess Minter (HHS goalkeeper) was late in seeing the shot, 1-0 JFK. With lots of support for the home side HHS re-composed themselves and worked well in the midfield with Sophie Barnett (first appearance for the team) having a shot at goal, only to be saved by the keeper. The team continued to put the home side under pressure and from this a corner was awarded. The cross came in and once again Barnett took a shot at goal, the ball fell at Nimisha Chundavadra's left foot and she took the opportunity to take the strike, 1-1. HHS continued with their impressive play, working hard in all areas of the pitch. Shots came in and Minter kept them out. The final whistle was looming, only eight minutes to go and HHS were looking for the winning goal. Both sides were using their substitutes to their advantage. Gulley stepped around three defenders, took a strike from outside the box and found the goal!

*Miss Garman, PE Department*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: Whilst support for school fixtures is always welcome, please would parents/supporters sign in at Reception if a fixture falls during the school day.**

## Gold Letters issued recently:

**Letter 122** Saracens RFC v Worcester Warriors

**Letter 123** Year 11 'Into the Sixth' Discussion Evening

**Letter 124** Year 12 Geography Field Trip to North Yorkshire

**Letter 125** Post 16 Choices: Diploma Courses

**Letter 126** Year 7 Parent Consultation Evening

**Letter 127** Year 11 Additional Science Coursework Day

*All Gold Letters can be viewed on our website:*

[www.hhs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hhs.herts.sch.uk)

School policies can be viewed on our website under 'about HHS/School Policies'. If you require a hard copy of any of the policies please get in touch with the School Office.

## Sickness/absence line

Please will all parents contact us daily if your child is sick, going to be late in due to a medical appointment, or is absent for any other reason. Please call our sickness/absence line on 01442 390103 by 9am if possible.